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A study of Ben Jonson's verse settles the question from another method of approach. Saintsbury throws out a hint that Jonson took much more liberty with the number of his syllables in his later than in his earlier plays. No one has ever gone into the matter. Having made a count of the syllables within the unrimed lines of the so-called 'early,' and so-called 'revised' portions of *A Tale of a Tub*, I find the average for one hundred lines to be as follows: 'early,' 24. 7; 'revised,' 24. 3. This result shows that if Ben Jonson's practice did vary, these parts were written at the same time. My count of the syllables within the unrimed lines of the first five and last two plays, and *A Tale of a Tub*, entire, and of a hundred lines of each of the intervening plays gives the following result, in an average for a hundred lines: *Every Man In*, 5; *Every Man Out*, 4. 5; *Case is Altered*, 2. 5; *Cynthia's Revels*, 4; *Poetaster*, 5; *Sejanus*, 3; *Volpone*, 9. 1; *Alchemist*, 15; *Cataline*, 3; *Devil is an Ass*, 12; *Staple of News*, 24; *New Inn*, 16. 6; *Magnetic Lady*, 24. 8; *Tale of a Tub* (entire), 24. 6. This proves two things. Both portions of *A Tale of a Tub* were written at the same time, and it was a late play.

In my edition of the play, which I hope to bring out in the Yale Series, in April, 1915, I have gone into the matter in greater detail. It seemed, however, worthy of notice at this time.

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A NOTE ON *As You Like It*, II, vii, 139 f.

Among all the numerous comments on Jaques' famous summary of the seven ages of man that have suggested parallels or sources for the speech, I do not remember to have seen remarked one analogous list that illustrates more forcibly than any other I know Shakespeare's striking criticism of traditional concepts by the light of experience and common sense. In the *Piazza Universale di tutte le Professioni del Mondo* (Venetia, MDCLXV,

p. 273), a wonderfully rich collection of sixteenth century pictures and ideas, Tommaso Garzoni discusses briefly the seven periods of human life, naming them abstractly, explaining the reason for their differing characters and adding a table of the seven ages of the world, the "stage" on which we play our parts.

The first age, "Infantia," lasts, says Garzoni, till the fourth year, the second, Childhood, to the fourteenth; "Adolescentia" takes the lad to his twentieth year, Youth to his fortieth, Maturity to his fifty-sixth; Age endures until the close of the sixty-eighth year, and from then till death, Decrepitude. "And astrologers say," Garzoni goes on to explain, "that the seven ages are dominated respectively by the planets Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn." If the medieval association of certain temperaments with certain planets be applied, an association which has left its trace in our vocabulary, the seven ages would exhibit characters unreasonable (lunatic), mercurial, loving, sunny, martial, jovial and saturnine, for each planet was believed to have in its composition a metal that actually influenced the bodily "humours" of the persons under its power.¹ In Ben Jonson's treatment of this problem there is a simplification of it into a more scientific form; the stars and their influences are discarded and the four "humours," "the choler, melancholy, phlegm and blood," compounded of the four elements of earth, air, water and fire in varying proportions,² are interpreted "by metaphor" as conditioning human temperament; again common usage has preserved the ghost of the concept in our adjectives, choleric, melancholic, phlegmatic, and sanguine.

Now Shakespeare, although he uses the ancient seven-fold division of man's life, rearranges it in such a way as to show that his classifications when he made them, depended

¹ This seems to have been medieval commonplace. Cf. Chaucer's *Chanoun Yemannes Tale*, 272 f., and, for further light on the character of the various planetary influences, *The Book of Quinte Essence* (1460-70), Early English Text Society.

² Jonson, *Every Man out of his Humour*, Induction.

on more than academic theories, whether of planetary interference in the world's affairs or of modern scientific analysis,—the theory of "humours" he more than once ridiculed. In place of Garzoni's abstractions stand Jaques' living figures; "the infant, mewling and puking in his nurse's arms" and "the whining schoolboy . . . creeping like snail, Unwillingly to school," are both drawn from life and have only enough of unreason and contradictoriness about them to justify by a far stretch their association respectively with "the inconstant moon" and Mercury, whose special metal, the astrological chemists of the Middle Ages decided, was the variable quicksilver. No planet but Venus could, of course, possibly regulate the Lover, "sighing like a furnace," but the Soldier should have been, according to orthodox tradition, governed in his jealousy of honor by Mars, the iron planet, "an enemy to alle thyngis"* except soldiers. Again, the Sun, the fourth influence according to Garzoni's list, should have been the fifth in Jaques', for Sol was conceived as the fullest in energy-giving power, "the worthiest planete"* of them all, whose metal, gold, is the one most sought after during man's maturity and also the one which might satirically be thought of as the object of the Justice's activities. In these two types evidently common sense far more than tradition determined selection, for if Jaques had been faithful to convention he would have reversed the places of his soldier and his man of law,—an inconceivable change if criticized by a standard based on probability or suitability of profession to age.

Another departure from convention is apparent in the realistic picture of the shrunken, hollow look of the "lean and slipper'd pantaloen," whose type is not at all that of the "frosty but kindly" age which might have been ruled by Jupiter, "the planete wele-willing to alle thingis . . . plentiful and plesyng,"* whose bright metal was tin. On the other hand the concluding misery, Decrepitude, suggests vividly the baleful ascendance of Saturn, the leaden star, "evel-willid and ful of

sekeness,"* who rises over and sets upon the "last scene of all."

The greater fitness of the medieval association of planet and temperament in youth and extreme age than in middle life might be made the basis of deductions that would lead far into the psychological habit which determines such classifications. The attention of the theorists who first attempted to bring order into the study of man's life was evidently caught by the more striking moments of the human career, just as the poets of nature earliest sang the brilliancies of spring; with the growth of rational observation and analysis the dead level of maturity was more closely studied, as well as the duller seasons of the year. But I have no wish here to push such suggestions, for my main object is only to call attention once more, by means of an as yet unnoted example, to Shakespeare's power of vivifying an old conception through bringing into it his own fresh and true analysis.

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BRIEF MENTION

Beatris, that pearl of medieval Dutch poetry, for many years very difficult of access, has at length appeared in a new and worthy dress as No. III of the Publications of the Philological Society (*Beatris, a Middle Dutch Legend*, edited by A. J. Barnouw, Oxford University Press, 1914). The editor, who is Lecturer in English in the University of Leyden, has on the whole acquitted himself admirably of his task. The text is meant to serve—somewhat like *Der arme Heinrich* in the case of Middle High German—as an introduction to the study of Middle Dutch, and hence sets out with a Grammar of Middle Dutch (pp. 1-46), which gives an outline of the Phonology and Accidence but no Syntax. While not taking the place of Franck's *Mittelniederländische Grammatik*, this summary will be found entirely adequate for the purpose it is meant to subserve. Its examples are all taken from the text of *Beatris*. The effort at condensation that is in evidence everywhere has perhaps not altogether made for clearness. Unscientific nomenclature also crops out here and there. Thus the monophthongization of *ai* and *au* is styled "smoothing" (§ 23) and the same *ē* and *ō* that resulted from this process are referred to

* *Book of Quinte Essence*, p. 26.